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## TIPS FOR A LIFETIME OF HEALTHY VISION

*The Wisconsin Optometric Association offers sight-saving advice in recognition of Save Your Vision Month*

**MADISON, WI** – Vision plays an important role in a person’s daily life; every waking minute, the eyes are working hard to see the world around us. The Wisconsin Optometric Association (WOA) and its members want to make sure that this work pays off in the form of excellent vision and eye health. In turn, people throughout the country want their vision to stay strong. According to the American Optometric Association’s (AOA) most recent annual American Eye-Q® survey, 40 percent of Americans worry about losing their eyesight over losing their ability to walk or hear.

“It’s easy to incorporate steps into your daily routine to ensure healthy eyes and vision,” advises Dr. Michael Tashner, WOA President and Platteville, WI optometrist. “Eating right, protecting against UV rays, avoiding Computer Vision Syndrome (CVS), and visiting your local eye doctor on a yearly basis are just a few things that can help keep your eyes and vision strong.”

### **Protect Against UV Rays, Regardless of the Season**

Long-term exposure to the sun poses significant risk not only to your skin, but also to your eyes. No matter what the season, it’s extremely important to wear sunglasses, choosing a pair that blocks more than 95 percent of UV-A and more than 99 percent of UV-B radiation.

### **Using Computers and Digital Devices**

According to the AOA, two-thirds of Americans spend up to seven hours a day using computers or other digital devices such as tablets and smart phones. This constant eye activity increases the risk for Computer Vision Syndrome (CVS) and can cause problems such as dry eye, eye strain, headaches, neck and/or backache, and fatigue. The WOA recommends that people practice the 20/20/20 rule when using computers and/or digital devices for an extended period of time: every 20 minutes, take a 20 second break, and look at something 20 feet away.

### **The Importance of Good Nutrition**

As part of a healthy diet, eat five servings of fruits and vegetables each day, especially leafy green vegetables. Six nutrients, including the antioxidants lutein and zeaxanthin, essential fatty acids, vitamins C and E, and the mineral zinc, have also been identified as helping to protect eyesight and promote eye health. Since the body does not produce these nutrients naturally, it’s important that they are incorporated into a daily diet and, in some cases, supplemented with vitamins.

### **Proper Contact Lens Care and Seeing Your Eye Doctor**

More than 40 million Americans use contact lenses to improve vision, and while some adhere to the medical guidelines for wearing contacts, many ignore the rules and put their vision at risk. Contact lens wearers who fail to follow their optometrist’s recommendations for use and wear can experience symptoms such as blurred or fuzzy vision, red or irritated eyes, pain in and around the eyes, or even a more serious condition known as keratitis, in which the cornea becomes inflamed.

Comprehensive exams performed by an optometrist not only evaluate a patient’s vision, but can also detect serious health problems such as high blood pressure and diabetes. “Seeing a doctor of optometry yearly will help keep patients on the path to healthy eyes and vision throughout their lives,” says Dr. Tashner.

To locate a nearby doctor of optometry, please visit <http://www.woa-eyes.org/members>.

### **About the Wisconsin Optometric Association**

*The Wisconsin Optometric Association (WOA) is a nonprofit affiliation of licensed doctors of optometry and associated businesses dedicated to the preservation and enhancement of the vision welfare of the people of Wisconsin. The WOA accomplishes its goals through: education and dissemination of information, organized governmental activity, legislation and regulation, mediation with consumer and public interest groups, and provision of collective benefits to its members. Approximately 640 doctors of optometry are currently members of the WOA, located in nearly every county in the state. All members must be licensed to practice optometry by the State of Wisconsin. For more information, visit WOA’s website at [www.woa-eyes.org](http://www.woa-eyes.org).*

### **About the American Eye-Q® survey:**

*The eighth annual American Eye-Q® survey was created and commissioned in conjunction with Penn, Schoen & Berland Associates (PSB). From March 15-18, 2013 using an online methodology, PSB interviewed 1,000 Americans 18 years and older who embodied a nationally representative sample of U.S. general population (margin of error at 95 percent confidence level).*